

Demand and the Perceptions of Tourists About Heritage Sites: A Study in Arunachal Pradesh

Dr. Pan Chowlik

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Indira Gandhi Government College, Tezu, Arunachal Pradesh

Abstract

This paper seeks to explore the demand and perceptions of visitors/ tourists in Tawang Monastery and Parshuram Kund which are considered as important cultural and religious heritage sites of the state, Arunachal Pradesh. The study also examines the trend and growth of tourists' inflow into Tawang Monastery and Parshuram Kund from 2015 to 2023 based on secondary data. To examine the nature and structure of tourist demand and perceptions of tourists about heritage sites, a sample survey of 400 tourists each from both the site were collected randomly. Both the sites have their own value and significance, Parshuram Kund is an important pilgrimage tourist destination whereas Tawang Monastery is one of the important cultural and religious tourist destinations of the state. The study analyses data by using statistical tools such as percentage, annual growth rate, graph, diagram, etc. The study showed that the inflow of tourist in both the sites has been fluctuating. On the basis of the empirical observation of primary data collected from the tourists visiting both the site it has been found that tourists demand better connectivity to the place, maintain cleanliness and hygiene, provide cafeteria facilities, trained tourist guides and better management of the sites. Perception of the tourists showed that despite the difficulties faced by them, tourists revealed that they have enjoyed visiting the sites and also said that they liked the sites and would visit again in future. The study is expected to provide valuable information to the policy maker in designing appropriate policy for the development of tourism at Tawang Monastery and Parshuram Kund.

Keywords: Heritage Site, Tawang Monastery, Parshuram Kund, Tourist Demand, Perceptions.

I. Introduction

Heritage site tourism is a practice of visiting heritage site by the people within the country or travel to abroad. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS, 1999) defined heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment.

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism comprises "the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes." Tourism is considered one of the fastest-growing service providing sectors in the world. Before the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, travel & tourism is the key sector for economic development and job creation throughout the world. Travel & Tourism accounted for 1 in 5 new jobs created across the world during 2014-2019, and 10.3% of all jobs (334 million) and 10.4% of

global GDP (US\$ 10 trillion) in 2019. In 2022, the Travel & Tourism sector contributed 7.6% to global GDP, an increase of 22% from 2021 and only 23% below 2019 levels. 22 million new jobs were created in the year 2022, representing an increase of 7.9% over 2021, and only 11.4% below 2019.

India's travel and tourism sector has witnessed substantial growth in the recent period. The sector is expected to grow at an annual rate of 7.8 per cent to reach around ₹33.8 trillion (US \$457 billion) which represents 7.2 per cent GDP of the whole economy by 2031 (IT&T 2022, WTTC). The sector has immense potential for further expansion in the tourism sector on account of the vast natural and cultural heritage in India. There are several challenges in this sector. Eliminating all these challenges will help the sector to realize its full potential and shape the tourism industry for tomorrow. However, despite the above facts the share of world tourism in India is very low which comprises nearly 1.64 per cent only (India Tourism Statistic, 2022).

India has made a unique place for tourists. Tourist attraction to India is because of its rich natural and cultural landscapes and is considered one of the most liked tourist destinations in Asia. Arunachal Pradesh is one of the states of North East India. It has a huge potential for tourism development. The total geographical area is 83,743 square kilometer out of which 80.50 per cent of its area is under forest cover which is one of the highest in India. The state is least densely populated with only 17 persons per square kilometer due to which vast forest and natural resources of the state are still unspoiled (Lama, 2016). The state has been emerging as one of the most favoured tourist destination of India. It is situated in the Eastern Himalayan ranges and the topography of the state mainly comprises of hills, mountains, snow capped peaks, river valleys, passes, waterfalls, lakes, green forests and a house of diverse species of flora and fauna which make its landscape a unique and beautiful one. The state is also endowed with historical and cultural heritage sites such as the Itafort, the Bhalukpong Fort, Bishmaknagar, Gaden Namgyal Lhatse (Tawang Monastery), Malinitham Temple, Parshuram Kund, etc. Thus, the state has a high potential to attract tourists for various types of tourism such as nature-based, ecotourism, heritage tourism, cultural and pilgrimage tourism, adventure tourism, rural tourism, wildlife-based tourism and spiritual tourism.

II. Objective

The objective of this paper is to explore and examine tourist demand and their perceptions on heritage sites tourism in Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery of Arunachal Pradesh. The study is expected to provide necessary and valuable information to the policy maker in designing appropriate policy for the development of tourism in both the sites.

III. Description of Study Area

The paper focuses mainly on two heritage sites namely: Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery of Arunachal Pradesh.

Tawang Monastery (Gaden Namgyal Lhatse) is an important cultural/ religious heritage site located in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, India about 2 kms from the township of Tawang, the head quarter of Tawang district. The Monastery is an important place for the Mahayana sect of Buddhism. It was founded by Merak lama Lodre Gyatso in the year 1680-81. The Monastery stands on the spur of a hill, about 10,000 feet above sea level and has ravines in the south and west, narrow ridge on the north and gradual slope on the east. It offers a commanding and picturesque view of the Tawang Chu (river) Valley. From a distance it appears like a fort as if guarding the votaries in the wide valley below.

Tawang Monastery is considered as the largest monastery in India and is the second largest monastery in Asia. Being the largest and the oldest Buddhist monastery in India, it is considered as the fountain-head of the spiritual life of the Buddhist people of that region (Norbu, 2016; <https://tawangmonastery.org>).

Parshuram Kund (Well of Parshuram) is considered as one of the important pilgrimage tourism destination of Arunachal Pradesh. The Kund is located in Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh, India. It is a holy place for Hinduism located in the beautiful lower ridge of Lohit River about 44 kms by road from Tezu, the head quarter of Lohit district. It is also connected from Wakro circle of Lohit district about 16 kms through the route Chongkham-Wakro-Parshuram. The place is associated with the legend of Parshuram expiating his sins. The Kalika-Puran (C. 8th Century A.D.) makes mentioned of this kund as a sacred place. The Yogini-Tantra states that a bath in the kund washes away all sins. Stream of pilgrims visit the Magh Sankranti Mela held in the month of January every year. On this occasion, the place takes a festive look with thousands of devotees coming from far and near places, and elaborate arrangements are made by the Government to extend transport, lodging, medical and other facilities to for the visitors (Gazetter of India, Arunachal Pradesh, Lohit District, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, 1978, Editors S. Dutta Choudhury).

IV. Trend and Growth of Tourist/ Visitor Arrivals in Tawang Monastery

Tawang Monastery is an important place for tourist attraction in the Tawang District of Arunachal Pradesh. All domestic and foreign visitors/ tourists who visit Tawang keep Tawang Monastery on their list of visits. The trend and growth of visitors' visits to Tawang Monastery and Tawang District of Arunachal Pradesh are presented in the Table and Figure below:

Table 1: Visitor/ Tourist Arrivals in Tawang Monastery, 2015 – 2023

Year	Visitor Arrivals			Annual Growth Rate (%)
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Total
2015	21875 (98.62)	305 (1.38)	22180 (100.00)	-
2016	24423 (98.87)	279 (1.13)	24702 (100.00)	11.37
2017	43059 (99.46)	235 (0.54)	43294 (100.00)	75.27
2018	50357 (99.52)	245 (0.48)	50602 (100.00)	16.88
2019	55823 (99.25)	421 (0.75)	56244 (100.00)	11.15
2020	5639 (99.21)	45 (0.79)	5684 (100.00)	-89.89
2021	23842 (99.98)	4 (0.02)	23846 (100.00)	319.53
2022	55245 (99.51)	270 (0.49)	55515 (100.00)	132.81
2023	72424 (98.91)	795 (1.09)	73219 (100.00)	31.89

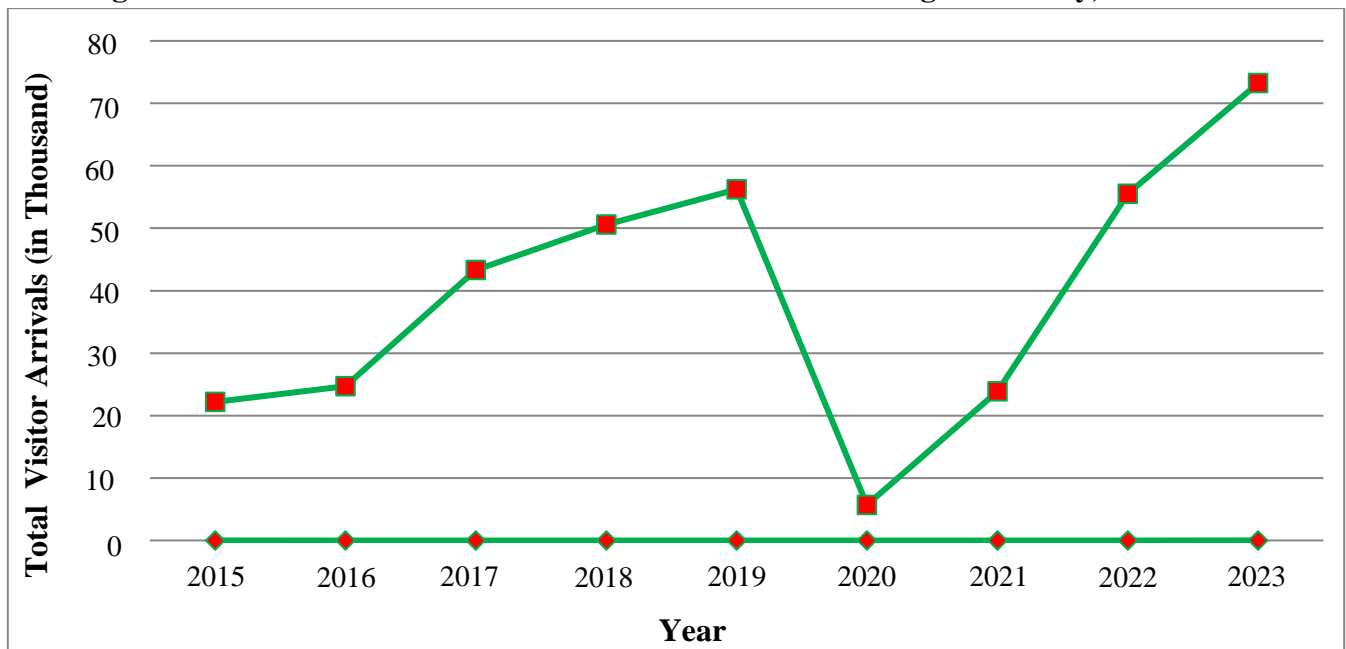
Note: The figure in parentheses indicates the percentage to total.

Source: District Tourism Office, Tawang District, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

From Table 1, it is seen that there has been a continuous increase in domestic visitors/ tourists visiting Tawang Monastery of Arunachal Pradesh from 2015 to 2023, except the year 2020 showed a decline which may be due to the restriction of the covid-19 pandemic in the movement of people. The number of foreign visitors visiting Tawang Monastery has been seen fluctuating over the year 2015 to 2023. It showed a decline from 2015 to 2017. However, in the years 2018 and 2019 it witnessed an increase, and

again a decline in 2020 and 2021. The decline in the years 2020 and 2021 may be due to pandemic situation. The year 2022 and 2023 again witnessed an increase of foreign visitors visiting Tawang Monastery. There has been a continuous increase in the total number of tourists visiting Tawang Monastery from 2015 to 2019. The year 2020 registered a decline of -89.89 per cent as compared to 2019 which may be due to pandemic situation in the whole world. The year 2021, 2022 and 2023 witnessed an annual growth of 319.53 per cent, 132.81 per cent and 31.89 per cent respectively compared to their preceding year.

Figure 1: Year Wise Total Visitor/ Tourist Arrivals to Tawang Monastery, 2015 – 2023



Source: District Tourism Office, Tawang District, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

Figure 1 shows that the number of total visitors/ tourists (Domestic and foreign) visiting Tawang Monastery has registered an increasing trend from 2015 to 2019. In the year 2020, the total visitors visit witnessed a decline which may be due to covid-19 pandemic. Thereafter, from the year 2021 to 2023 it showed an increasing trend in total visitors.

Trend and Growth of Tourist/ Visitor Arrivals in Parshuram Kund

Parshuram Kund is a holy place for Hinduism which is located in Lohit District of Arunachal Pradesh. Visitors/ Pilgrims visit Parshuram Kund throughout the year, but the best date and time to visit Parshuram Kund is on January 14 during Makar Sankranti every year. The trend and growth of visitors' visits to Parshuram Kund of Arunachal Pradesh are presented in the Table and Figure below:

Table 2: Visitor/ Tourist Arrivals in Parshuram Kund from 2016 – 2023

Year	Visitor Arrivals			Annual Growth Rate (%)
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Total
2016	70000 (99.92)	56 (0.08)	70056 (100.00)	-
2017	60000 (99.86)	87 (0.14)	60087 (100.00)	-14.23

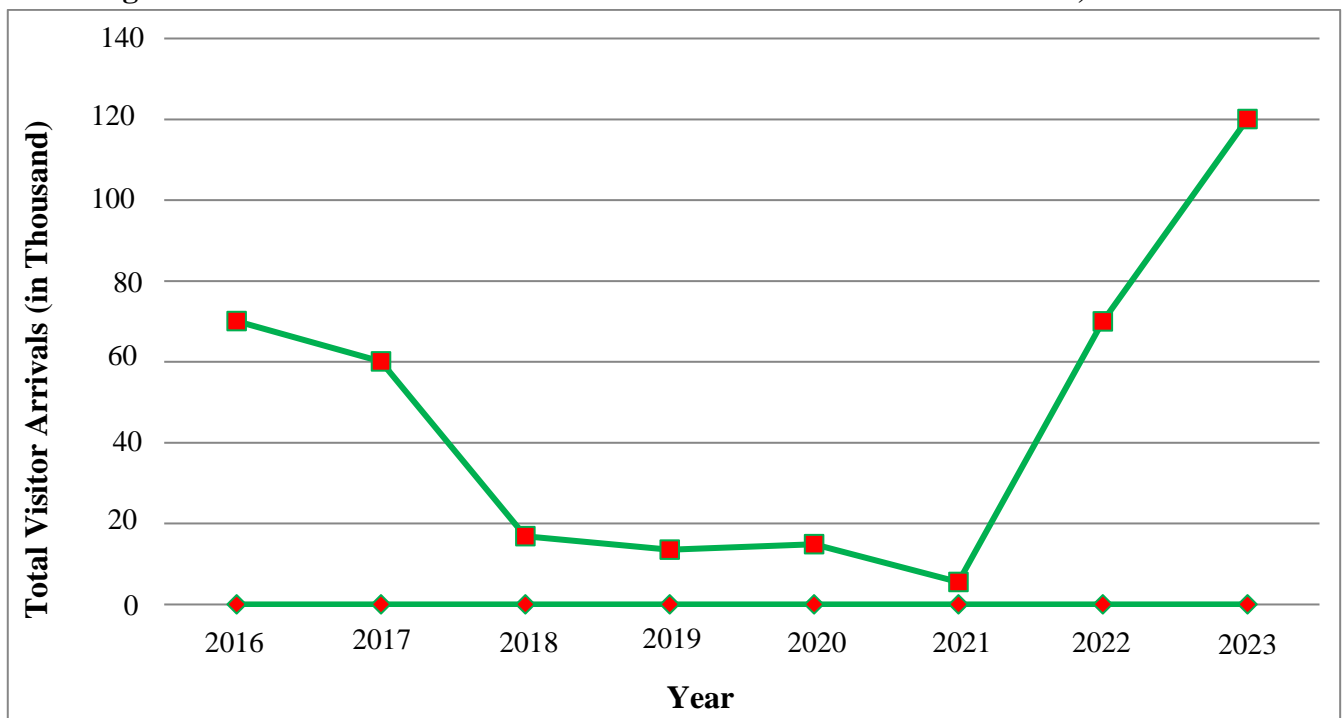
2018	16792 (99.61)	66 (0.39)	16858 (100.00)	-71.94
2019	13515 (99.76)	33 (0.24)	13548 (100.00)	-19.63
2020	14900 (99.96)	6 (0.04)	14906 (100.00)	10.02
2021	5546 (100.00)	0 (0.00)	5546 (100.00)	-62.79
2022	70000 (100.00)	0 (0.00)	70000 (100.00)	1162.17
2023	120000 (99.98)	30 (0.02)	120030 (100.00)	71.47

Note: The figure in parentheses indicates the percentage to total.

Source: District Tourism Office, Lohit District, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

Table 2 shows the arrival of domestic and foreign visitors/ tourists in Parshuram Kund from 2016 to 2023. It is seen that there is a fluctuation in the number of domestic visitors visiting Parshuram Kund of Arunachal Pradesh from 2016 to 2023. There has been a continuous decline, except in the year 2020, 2022 and 2023 witnessed an increase in domestic visitors. The growth of foreign visitors visiting Parshuram Kund was also fluctuating from 2016 to 2023. It showed an increase in the year 2017 after that it registered a continuous decline. The year 2023 witnessed an increase in foreign visitors visiting Parshuram Kund. The total number of visitors visiting Parshuram Kund during the same period witnessed a decline, except in the year 2020, 2022 and 2023 registered an increase of 10.02 per cent, 1162.17 per cent and 71.47 per cent respectively as compared to their preceding year. The reason for the decline in the number of total visitors may be the site Parshuram Kund is losing its competitiveness with other newly developed sites and another reason may be its remote location, constraints, lack of basic infrastructural facilities and services, etc.

Figure 2: Year Wise Total Visitor/ Tourist Arrivals to Prashuram Kund, 2016 – 2023



Source: District Tourism Office, Lohit District, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.

Figure 2 shows that the total number of visitors/ tourists (Domestic and foreign) visiting Parshuram Kund from 2016 to 2023 has registered a fluctuating trend, except in the year 2020, 2022 and 2023 it has registered an annual growth of 10.02 per cent, 1162.17 per cent and 71.47 per cent respectively in total tourists visiting the site Parshuram Kund.

V. Data Source and Methodology

The study used both primary and secondary data. The secondary data were collected from Indian Tourism Statistics, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, District Tourism office, Tezu, Arunachal Pradesh, District Tourism office, Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh and Tourism Statistics of Arunachal Pradesh, Directorate of Tourism, Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The primary data which were collected by conducting field survey of tourists in the study area. The survey was carried out with the help of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to collect the socio-economic variables like age, sex, educational qualification, occupation, income, etc. Face to face interview method was used to collect the information from the surveyed tourists by using random sampling technique. A total number of 400 tourists each for both the sites Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery were surveyed in the year 2022 and 2023.

The data were analysed using various statistical tools and the analysis was done by using software like MS Excel and SPSS.

VI. Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic Characteristics, Demand Pattern and the Perceptions of the Surveyed Visitors

Tourist's decision to travel and demand for tourism are influenced by the socio-economic characteristics of the tourists. The study of socio-economic characteristic, demand pattern and the perceptions of the tourists are considered very important for developing various facilities in a tourist destination in accordance with the need and demand pattern of the tourists. The socio-economic characteristics, demand pattern and their perceptions include gender, age, education level, occupation, households' income, purpose of visit, frequency of visit, duration of stay, source of information, expenditure pattern of tourists in the study area, responses to various facilities enjoyed, etc. are very significant in formulating appropriate policy for promoting tourism development.

Classification of Surveyed Visitors/ Tourists by Gender: The analysis of gender-wise distribution of surveyed tourists shows that out of the total 400 surveyed tourists (respondents) who visited Parshuram Kund 70.75 per cent of tourists were male and 29.25 per cent were female. Among the total 400 tourists surveyed for Tawang Monastery, it was found that 62.75 per cent tourists were male and 37.25 per cent were female tourists.

Classification of Surveyed Visitors by Age: Age is also an important determinant for the tourists demand to visit cultural and religious heritage sites. From the surveyed tourists of Parshuram Kund, it was found that 9.30 per cent were below 30 years, and 7.80 per cent tourists were above 55 years. The rest 82.90 per cent were in the age of 30 to 55 years. The study found that 6.8 per cent of surveyed tourists of Tawang Monastery were below 30 years of age, and 3.50 per cent were above 55 years. The rest 89.70 per cent were in the age of 30 to 55 years.

Classification of Surveyed Tourists by Level of Education: The level of education is an important factor in determining the demand for tourism. It is argued that educated people understand about the importance of tourism and its recreational value. The study found that the average level of education of

the surveyed respondents of Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery was considerably high and there were no illiterate respondents in the surveyed sample of both the sites. It was found that majority 56.25 per cent of Parshuram Kund respondents were graduate and above and 90.75 per cent of Tawang Monastery respondents were graduate and above level of education.

Classification of Surveyed Visitors by Occupation: Occupation is also an important determinant of demand for tourism and recreation. The study found that most of the tourists/visitors of Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery were engaged in service sector. The details are presented in Table 3.

Figure 3: Percentage of Surveyed Visitors Classified by Occupation for Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery

Occupation	Parshuram Kund	Tawang Monastery
Service (Government)	21.25	27.50
Service (Private)	20.00	31.25
Businessman	29.50	25.25
Farmer	9.00	1.00
Student	3.25	1.75
Others	17.00	13.25
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2022-2023

Classification of Surveyed Visitors by Annual Household Income: Income is one of the important determinants which influence the demand for tourism and recreation. Higher the level of income of the people higher will be the demand for tourism and recreation. From the surveyed sample for Parshuram Kund, it was found that most of the tourists were in the high-middle-income group. Moreover, it was observed that in Tawang Monastery 94.50 per cent were either in the high middle-income group or high-income group. The details are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Percentage of Surveyed Visitors Classified by Annual Household Income for Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery

Approximate Annual Household Income	Parshuram Kund	Tawang Monastery
Up to 3 Lakhs	17.50	0.50
3 Lakhs – 5 Lakhs	57.75	5.50
5 Lakhs – 8 Lakhs	10.25	45.75
8 Lakhs – 10 Lakhs	14.50	36.50
10 Lakh and Above	0	11.75
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2022-2023

Classification of Visitors by State of Origin: It is also important to know the state of origin of the tourists in order to develop facilities and services in accordance with their requirements. The study found that 70.0 per cent of tourists/visitors surveyed at Parshuram Kund, were from Assam, 24.75 per cent were from Arunachal Pradesh, 1.0 per cent were from other northeastern states excluding Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, 3.50 per cent were from other states of India excluding northeastern states, and 0.75 per cent are from foreign countries. Among the surveyed tourists/visitors who visited Tawang Monastery, 38.50 per cent were from Assam, followed by other states of India excluding northeastern states (33.25 per cent) and Arunachal Pradesh (19.25 per cent). The remaining visitors were from other northeastern states excluding Arunachal Pradesh and Assam (6.25 per cent) and foreign countries (2.75 per cent).

Surveyed Tourists Frequency of Visit: To know the nature of the visit performed by the surveyed tourists to Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery, the tourists/ visitors were asked whether their visit was for the first time, the second time, or thrice and more. The study found that the tendency to re-visit to Parshuram Kund was relatively very high (69.0 per cent). In Tawang Monastery 78.0 per cent of surveyed tourists were visiting for the first time.

Purpose of Visit: Purpose of tourists visit to a destination provides useful information to develop various facilities in the destination to enhance tourism. From the surveyed sample of Parshuram Kund, it was found that the majority (63.96 per cent) of the tourists/visitors visited Parshuram Kund for religious/worship purposes and in Tawang Monastery 33.45 per cent came to enjoy the natural beauty, 31.13 per cent visit for recreation, followed by 25.36 per cent to know about the culture of the people. The details are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Percentage of Surveyed Visitors Classified by Purpose of Visit to Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery

Purpose of visit	Parshuram Kund	Tawang Monastery
Recreation	19.80	13.13
Religious/Worship	63.96	8.60
Educational purpose	0.49	1.46
Enjoy natural beauty	13.31	33.45
To know about culture of the people	2.44	25.36
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2022-2023

Companion of Travel: Tourists travel to a destination with different types of companion or group. The study found that in both the sites Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery most of the surveyed tourists/visitors were travelling with their family members and group of more than one family. 54.0 per cent of Parshuram Kund surveyed tourists/visitors travelled in a group of more than one family, 23.75 per cent travelled with their family members, 20.0 per cent with friends, 1.75 per cent were couple tourists and only 0.50 per cent travelled alone. From the surveyed tourists of Tawang Monastery it was found that 38.75 per cent tourists travelled with their family members, 29.50 per cent with their friends, 25.75 per cent travelled in a group of more than one family and 6.0 per cent were couple tourists.

Source of Information: Source of information is also an important factor which influences tourists to visit a destination. Availability of reliable source of information regarding a destination can enhance tourism. Therefore, an attempt was made to ask the surveyed tourists to mention their sources of information about Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery. The study shows that 69.0 per cent of surveyed tourists of Parshuram Kund obtained the information from their previous visit, followed by word of mouth (22.25 per cent) and 8.75 per cent from the Internet. The sources of information about Tawang Monastery by the surveyed visitors revealed that 60.0 per cent got to know Tawang Monastery from the internet, 22.0 per cent from their previous visit, 13.50 per cent knew from word of mouth, and 4.50 per cent obtained from electronic media.

Expenditure Pattern of the Visitors/ Tourists: he expenditure pattern of the tourists/visitors provides valuable information for the policy maker, as their expenditure pattern show their demand for various facilities and services. Therefore, the study also made an attempt to identify the different heads on which expenditure was made by the tourists in Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery. The details are given in the Table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of Surveyed Visitors on the Basis of Expenditure Incurred on Different Heads Amount (in Percentage)

Expenditure	Parshuram Kund	Tawang Monastery
Accommodation	NA	37.99
Food and Drink	34.15	22.09
Local Transport	NA	18.58
Shopping	65.85	21.34
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2022-2023

* Note: NA (Not Applicable)

It was found that 65.85 per cent of the total expenditure was made in shopping by the tourists in Parshuram Kund and 34.15 per cent was made on food and drink. The expenditure head for accommodation and local transport were not applicable (NA), because due to COVID-19 pandemic tourists were not allowed to stay and visit other places. The study revealed that 37.99 per cent of the total expenditure was made by the tourists of Tawang Monastery in accommodation, followed by 22.09 per cent in food and drink, 21.34 per cent in shopping and 18.58 per cent was spent in local transport.

Response of Surveyed Visitors/ Tourists on Infrastructural Facilities Available at the Sites: The availability of infrastructural facilities in a place also influences the tourists to visit, so an attempt was made to ask the surveyed visitors to give their responses regarding accommodation, quality of food, mode of transportation, and cleanliness. Based on their satisfaction and the condition of the facilities available tourists were asked to rank in five categories namely, poor, average, good, very good, and excellent. The response on accommodation facilities available was not applicable, as the survey was conducted during COVID-19 Pandemic. It was found that 62.75 per cent considered the quality of food they consumed was good and 37.25 per cent stated the quality of food to be average. Mode of transportation is also an important factor that determines the tourists to visit a particular site. The study

revealed that 44.25 per cent experience the mode of transport as good whereas 55.75 per cent considered it as average. The opinion about the cleanliness shows that 65.5 per cent were of the opinion that the cleanliness was good and 39.5 per cent were not fully satisfied with the cleanliness and marked as average.

From the survey of Tawang Monastery, it was found that tourists ranked accommodation as 24.75 per cent good, 69.25 per cent as very good, and around 6 per cent did not avail accommodation as they stayed in their relative's place. Regarding the quality of food consumed by the tourists, 71.5 per cent were of the opinion that the quality of food was very good, 28.0 per cent said the quality of food was good and only 0.5 per cent considered the quality of food as average. The opinion of surveyed tourists about mode of transport to visit Tawang Monastery revealed that 16.5 per cent considered mode of transport as very good, 81.0 per cent were of the opinion that it was good and only 2.5 per cent considered as average. Regarding the cleanliness of Tawang Monastery, 10.25 per cent of the tourists ranked cleanliness as very good, 89.0 per cent marked as good and only 0.75 per cent were not fully satisfied and marked as average.

Visitors Opinion about the Satisfaction of Present Facilities & Services Available

Tourists' satisfaction level about the present facilities and services available in a destination provides useful information for the development of tourism. From the study it was found that 91.5 per cent of the surveyed tourists of Parshuram Kund and 83.5 per cent of visitors of Tawang Monastery responded "No" as they were not fully satisfied with the present services and facilities available at the sites. Tourists revealed their opinion that they like to see improvement in cleanliness and better hygienic washrooms, better management of the sites, more cafeteria facilities, parking area, rest room, trained guide for the tourists, etc for both the sites.

Surveyed Visitors/ Tourists Faced Difficulties to Visit to the Sites: Difficulties faced by the tourists are a negative impact of tourism for a destination. From the survey of Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery, it was found that 80.75 per cent of Parshuram Kund and 69.0 per cent of the Tawang Monastery surveyed tourists revealed that they faced some kinds of difficulties to visit the sites.

In Parshuram Kund, 54.76 per cent of the tourists/visitors faced the problem of good quality food and other consumable items and 45.24 per cent faced transport and communication problems. The majority (53.45 per cent) of the tourists/visitors visiting Tawang Monastery faced problems of transport and communication, 29.74 per cent revealed cold weather conditions, road blocks due to heavy snowfall, followed by the problem of accommodation 15.95 per cent and lack of good quality food and other consumable items 0.86 per cent.

However, despite the difficulties faced by the surveyed visitors during their visit to Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery, most of the tourists/visitors revealed that their visit was a satisfying and wonderful experience. 91.5 per cent of the surveyed tourists of Parshuram Kund and 83 per cent of Tawang Monastery revealed their willingness to visit again.

VII. Conclusion and Policy Implication

Based on the above discussion and findings, it can be concluded that Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery is an important cultural/ religious heritage tourism sites of Arunachal Pradesh. Tourists from all over the country and from the world visit every year to both the sites. However, the inflow of tourists/visitors in Parshuram Kund showed a fluctuating trend which indicates that the site is losing its

competitive position with other sites or it may be due to lack of proper facilities and services. The arrivals of tourists/ visitors in Tawang monastery have witnessed a increasing trend during the year 2015 to 2023, except the year 2020 registered a decline of -89.89 per cent as compared to 2019 which may be due to pandemic situation in the whole world.

The study found that 70.75 per cent of Parshuram Kund and 62.75 per cent of Tawang Monastery respondents for the survey were male. The average age of Parshuram Kund respondents was 40.55 years and Tawang monastery was 39.96 years. The average level of education of the surveyed respondents of Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery was considerably high and there were no illiterate respondents in the surveyed sample of both the sites, 56.25 per cent of Parshuram Kund and 90.75 per cent of Tawang Monastery respondents were graduate and above. Occupation of the surveyed sample shows that most of the respondents (40.25 per cent) of Parshuram Kund and 58.75 per cent of Tawang Monastery were engaged in the service sector. Most of the tourists of Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery were in the high-middle-income group. Tourists in both the sites were mainly from Assam. The tendency to re-visit to Parshuram Kund was very high (69.0 per cent) and 78.0 per cent visited Tawang Monastery for the first time. It was found that 63.96 per cent of the tourists/visitors visited Parshuram Kund for religious/worship purposes and most of the tourists/visitors visited Tawang Monastery to enjoy the natural beauty (33.45 per cent), recreation (31.13 per cent). The study shows that majority (69.0 per cent) of surveyed tourists obtained information about Parshuram Kund from their previous visit and 60.0 per cent got to know Tawang Monastery from the internet. The study found that expenditure on shopping was more in Parshuram Kund, because tourists/visitors spend some amount for puja items in the kund and temple. The accommodation expenditure was more for the tourists in Tawang Monastery.

It was found that 62.75 per cent considered the quality of food as good, 55.75 per cent considered mode of transport as average and 39.50 per cent were not fully satisfied with the cleanliness and marked as average for Parshuram Kund. 69.25 per cent tourists of Tawang Monastery ranked accommodation as very good, 71.5 per cent were of the opinion that the quality of food was very good and 28.0 per cent said the quality of food was good, 81.0 per cent considered mode of transport as good and 89.0 per cent marked as good for cleanliness and only 0.75 per cent were not fully satisfied and marked as average.

The study found that 91.50 per cent of Parshuram Kund and 83.50 per cent of Tawang Monastery surveyed tourists were not fully satisfied with the present services and facilities available at the sites. They suggested that cleanliness and better hygienic washrooms should be maintained, better management of the sites, more cafeteria facilities, parking area, rest room, trained guide for the tourists, etc for both the sites. Despite of the lack of facilities and services, 91.50 per cent of Parshuram Kund and 83.0 per cent of Tawang Monastery tourists/visitors revealed that they have satisfied and showed willingness to visit again.

The result of the study led to the following suggestions that can be made for tourism development in both the sites. Focus should be made on regular maintenance and beautification of the sites and improved connectivity of the sites/ place with the rest of the world. There is a need to focus on more hygienic washroom, cafeteria, parking areas, restroom, etc for the tourists. Better accommodation facilities with all the basic facilities should be developed. Well trained tourist guide should be made available for the safety and convenience of the tourists/ visitors. Support for producing more attractive, varieties and quality handloom and handicraft products to enhance the income of the local people. Both the sites Parshuram Kund and Tawang Monastery has a continued market for heritage tourism and it also

signifies further expansion and growth of heritage tourism without creating inconvenience to both the sites.

REFERENCES

1. Choudhury, S Dutta (1978): *Gazetter of India*, Arunachal Pradesh, Lohit District, Government of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. Government of India (2021): *India Tourism Statistics at a Glance- 2021*, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi.
3. Government of India (2021): *India Tourism Statistics 2021*, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi.
4. Government of India (2022): *India Tourism Statistics 2022*, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi.
5. Government of India (2023): *India Tourism Statistics 2023*, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, New Delhi.
6. ICOMOS (1999): *International Cultural Tourism Charter: Managing tourism at places of heritage significance*, 12th General Assembly in Mexico, October 1999.
7. Lama, M (2016): Tourism Development and Conservation of Environment in Eastern Himalayas: A Case of Arunachal Pradesh, *North Eastern Economic Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1-7.
8. Lama, A (2021): Ecotourism Development in a Remote District of India: A Study of Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh, *EPRA International Journal of Research and Development*, Vol. 6, issue: 8, pp. 50-62.
9. Norbu T. (2016): *Tawang Monastery, The Spiritual Wonder of India*, Bhabani Offset & Imaging System Pvt. Ltd.7 Lachit Lachit Lane, Rajgar Road, Guwahati-781007.
10. World Travel and Tourism Council (2019): *Travel & Tourism Global Economic Impact & Trends 2019*.

WEBSITES

1. <https://tawangmonastery.org>
2. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1250204/india-contribution-of-travel-and-tourism-to-gdp/>